

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5 1. A method for selecting electronic components from a remote database over a distributed electronic network, comprising the steps of:

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 storing a plurality of dynamic parts in a remote parts database, each said dynamic part representing an individual electronic component;

 connecting a user computer to said remote parts database; and

10 embedding a dynamic part from said remote parts database into an application running on the user's computer.

 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said application running on the user's computer comprises a software program for modeling an electronic design.

 3. The method of claim 2, wherein said dynamic part functions within said application as a component of a modeled electronic design.

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20 4. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of displaying said dynamic parts graphically on the user's computer, and receiving a selection indication of a dynamic part from the user.

 5. The method of claim 4, wherein said selection indication is performed by the user placing a graphical icon representing the selected dynamic part into said application.

25 6. The method of claim 1, wherein each said dynamic part is associated with a plurality of component data items.

7. The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of copying said component data items into a local database connected to said user computer upon embedding said dynamic part into the application.

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8. The method of claim 7, wherein said local database comprises a resource planning database, said method further comprising the steps of entering a component represented by said dynamic part into a parts approval process, and comparing the component with data records of components already stored in said resource planning database.

9. The method of claim 7, further comprising the step of updating said local database from said remote parts database by moving data from said remote parts database to said local database without user intervention.

10. The method of claim 7, further comprising the step of updating said local database from said remote parts database by moving data from said remote parts database to said local database in response to a user request for said data.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein said embedded dynamic part comprises a link to associated data stored in said remote parts database.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein said embedded dynamic part comprises a link to associated data stored in a database of a supplier or distributor of the electronic component represented by said dynamic part.

13. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of embedding a set of said dynamic parts into said application running on the user's computer, and generating an electronic bill of materials based on said dynamic parts in said application, said electronic bill of materials

comprising a link to either said remote parts database or another remote database for each dynamic part.

5 14. A system for providing electronic components to users over a distributed electronic network, comprising:

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a remote parts database;
a plurality of dynamic parts stored in said database, each of said dynamic parts representing an individual electronic component; and

10 a server connected to said remote parts database and to the distributed electronic network, for connecting a user computer to said remote parts database and for transmitting dynamic parts to an application running on the user computer.

15 15. The system of claim 14, wherein said application running on the user computer comprises a software program for modeling an electronic design.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein said dynamic parts function within said application as components of a modeled electronic design.

20 17. The system of claim 14, wherein said server transmits a list of dynamic parts to the user computer for graphical display, and receives a selection indication of a dynamic part from the user computer.

18. The system of claim 14, wherein each said dynamic part is associated with a plurality of component data items.

25 19. The system of claim 18, further comprising a local database connected to the user computer, said local database storing dynamic parts transmitted to the user computer.

20. The system of claim 19, wherein said local database comprises a resource planning database containing data records of approved parts, said system further comprising a parts approval process for comparing each dynamic part transmitted to the user computer with said data records of approved parts.

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21. The system of claim 18, wherein one or more of said dynamic parts transmitted to the user computer comprises a link to either said remote parts database or another remote database.

22. The system of claim 18, further comprising a process for generating an electronic bill of materials based on said dynamic parts transmitted to said application on the user computer, said electronic bill of materials comprising a link for each dynamic part to either said remote parts database or another remote database.

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